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Alleged Perpetrator Of Lutheran Church Massacre Where 600 Were Murdered Refutes Allegation Terming It As Lies

February 13, 2018 Cholo Brooks Liberia 0



Experts expect Fall Armyworm may spread throughout South Africa

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-14 17:00:35

Although this fall armyworm attacks mostly maize plants, it may occasionally attack cotton, wheat, sorghum, soybeans, potatoes and groundnuts



Improving Livestock Health in South Sudan

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-14 16:52:30

Through the USAID/OFDA-supported Livestock Emergency Response Program, VSF/G supports community animal health workers to conduct vaccination campaigns in areas with high risk of livestock disease



World Health Organization moves to contain Nigeria's Lassa fever outbreak

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-14 16:38:10

Between 1 January and 4 February 2018, nearly 450 suspected cases were reported, of which 132 are laboratory confirmed Lassa fever



The Economy of Illicit Trade in West Africa

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(Daily News Philly.com) – It was the first mass murder of civilians in the Liberian Civil Wars – a gruesome foreshadowing of the atrocities to come in a conflict that ravaged the West African nation for more than 14 years and left hundreds of thousands of civilians dead.

In July 1990, government soldiers loyal to President Samuel Doe burst into St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Monrovia and opened fire on 2,000 civilians seeking sanctuary from the violence in the capital.

Mothers saw their children gunned down in pews. Men watched in horror as their brothers were hacked to death by machete-wielding soldiers. Six hundred people died – their bodies left to rot until volunteers buried the corpses two months later.

No one was held accountable.

But nearly three decades later, an international human rights organization believes it has found the man who led that attack living in Delaware County and claiming political asylum under the same laws that many of his alleged victims used to flee to the United States.

CONEX PETROLEUM GROUP OF COMPANIES

T. Nelson Williams, II to head Operations at Cones Petroleum Group of Companies

Caroline Richards Klark to head Cones Petroleum Services as General Manager

MONROVIA, Liberia – February 13, 2018, with immediate effect, The Chairman and Board of Directors of Cones Petroleum Group of Companies are pleased to announce the appointment of T. Nelson Williams, II as Chief Operating Officer / Senior Vice President of Cones Petroleum Group of Companies. Williams will be responsible for the profitability and expansion of all Cones Petroleum related divisions and will report to the CEO and Chairman of the Board.

He is currently the Executive Chairman at Integrity Consultancy, Incorporated, a management consultancy firm based in Monrovia.

Previously Williams served as Managing Director at the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC), 2009 – 2013 and Deputy Managing Director from 2007-2009. During his tenure LPRC revenues increased from \$100 million in 2009 to \$23.8 million in 2014. He spearheaded the implementation and successful completion of several infrastructural projects, increasing the petroleum storage facilities in Liberia.

Williams earned a Master in Public Administration (MPA) from North Carolina Central University, a Post Graduate Diploma in Public and Private sector Human Resources Management from North Carolina State University and a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from St. Augustine's University. He is also a certified Project Manager and Trainer.

CPC is also pleased to announce that Caroline Richards Klark has been retained to head Cones Petroleum Services as General Manager. She will head the petroleum importation division of CPC. Prior to joining Cones she served in various executive positions of Ecobank, Liberia, Ltd., including Head of Commercial Banking and Head of Consumer Banking. She brings to Cones a wealth of experience in business development through industry specific strategic and trade finance.

Caroline has a Master Degree in Finance and Bachelor in Economics. She also has numerous professional certifications, including certificates in International Trade Finance and Financial Risk Management. She will report to the Chief Operating Officer/Senior Vice President.



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Annual Message By H.E. President George Manneh Weah, President Of The Republic Of Liberia To The 54th National Legislature – Monday January 29, 2018



President George Manneh Weah delivering his inaugural address at the Samuel Kanyon Doe Sports Complex – January 22, 2018; See full text

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-14 16:16:07

Tuesday 20 February 2018, 8:30 a.m.
media briefing, 9:30 a.m. launch event,
OECD Conference Centre, 2 rue André-
Pascal, 75016 Paris



Gary al-Smith, M.anifest, MzVee, and Wiyala join UNICEF to call for fairer chances for adolescent girls in Ghana

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-14 15:59:13

Launch of the UNICEF Ampe Challenge with MzVee and Wiyala



International Organization for Migration (IOM) Ghana Concludes Safe Migration Information Campaign

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-14 12:44:52

The campaign aims to raise awareness among community members, especially youth, regarding the realities of irregular migration



Stepping up a gear: Ecobank fintech boosts financial inclusion in Africa

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-14 10:51:06

The Africa Tech summit takes place on 14 and 15 February in Kigali, Rwanda



Kinshasa joins flydubai's growing network in Africa

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-14 09:45:15

flydubai becomes the first UAE carrier to operate flights to N'djili Airport (also known as Kinshasa International Airport)



Honoris United Universities formally welcomes two leading institutions to its pan-African network

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-14 08:40:49

On Monday, the San Francisco-based Center for Justice and Accountability sued Moses W. Thomas, 64, of Sharon Hill, on behalf of four survivors of the Lutheran Church Massacre, seeking to recover damages for torture, inhumane treatment, and crimes against humanity.

"Given the significance of this attack, it's important that someone be held to account," said Nushin Sarkarati, one of the lawyers representing the plaintiffs. "A lot of people are still thoroughly destroyed by what they experienced that night."

Thomas – speaking by phone from Klade's, a West African restaurant in Elmwood where his girlfriend works – insisted that his accusers have the wrong man.

"It's all lies," he said. "The stuff they're talking about is nonsense. You can call anyone in the Republic of Liberia and give them my name, and they will tell you that this is nonsense."

Thomas is the fourth Liberian national living in the Philadelphia suburbs to face accusations within the last four years of committing atrocities in a war they believed they had left behind when they arrived in the United States.

A federal jury convicted Mohammed Jabateh, 51, of East Lansdowne, in October of lying to U.S. authorities about war crimes he committed under the nom de guerre "Jungle Jabbah." Isaac Kannah, 52, of Philadelphia, pleaded guilty to perjury charges in December for concealing his own wartime actions while serving as a character witness in a case in New York.

And this month, Tom Woewiyu, 72, of Collingdale – the former spokesman for the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, the political party of Doe's successor, Charles Taylor – is scheduled to face trial in Philadelphia for alleged lies he told on U.S. immigration forms.

Each case has taken on outsize importance among Liberians here and in Africa, where no one has ever been held criminally responsible for the documented atrocities committed in the back-to-back civil wars that upended the country between 1989 and 2003. In fact, many of those who have been accused hold positions of power in the nation's government.

The suit filed against Thomas on Monday in federal court in Philadelphia is unusual in several respects. Unlike the other defendants, he was not criminally charged. Instead, the lawsuit seeks to extract damages under a little-used law – the Torture Victim Protection Act – that allows foreigners to pursue civil claims for torture and extrajudicial killings against people living in the U.S.

Still, Sarkarati sees the efforts of federal prosecutors, international investigators who have pursued similar allegations, and organizations like hers as of a piece.

"The goal would always be to see criminal cases brought for war crimes and atrocities," she said. "But when that's not possible, there is an opportunity for justice in civil suits. The victims still get their day in court and a chance to hold these individuals accountable."

The plaintiffs she represents filed their case under pseudonyms, claiming fear of retaliation in Liberia, where the ethnic resentments that fueled the wars still run deep and continue to drive politics.

Each survived the massacre by hiding under piles of dead bodies and feigning death as soldiers stabbed at corpses with machetes and bayonets to ensure their victims had been killed, the lawsuit says.

The suit does not specifically accuse Thomas of killing anyone. But it alleges that in 1990, he served as the commander of the Liberian army's Special Anti-Terrorist Unit (SATU), the elite special forces team established by Doe to serve as the personal guard to the president.

And by the summer of 1990, suspicion within Monrovia ran high. The city was surrounded by forces loyal to Taylor, Doe's eventual successor. Doe believed that the local population of ethnic Mano and Gio people was more loyal to the invading army than to his own.

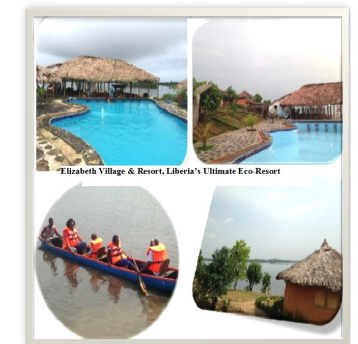
Hoping to root out spies and potential rebels, the SATU pulled Manos and Gios from their homes, hauling them off to detention centers in military barracks or worse – shooting and decapitating them in the streets. Several families fled to shelters like St. Peter's Lutheran, fearing retribution.

Thomas, the lawsuit alleges, stopped by the church compound in the days before the attack to pledge he would protect those hiding inside. Yet on the night of July 29, his accusers now say, he ordered 45 government soldiers to kill everyone in the building.

"Men, women, and children were gunned down as they attempted to flee to safety," the suit describes. "Many who survived the initial rounds of shooting were soon hacked to death with



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Ecole Marocaine des Sciences de l'Ingénieur (EMSI) in Morocco and YK Business School (YKBS) in Mauritius join the Honoris network, furthering its mission to provide education for impact across the continent



Going for Gold - Australia and Egypt working together to develop the Egyptian mining sector

Language: en | Date: 2018-02-13 16:56:32

Egypt has strong potential to develop further its mining sector and attract significant international investment

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machetes as soldiers passed through the church and an adjacent school building, ensuring the slaughter was complete."

Asked about those allegations Monday, Thomas scoffed at the lawsuit's description of his role. Although he admits he was a SATU commander and received specialized military training in Israel in the 1980s, he insists he never left the presidential palace on the day of the massacre.

"Nobody would have instructed me to do such a thing," he said. "I was trained to protect rather than destroy lives."

In fact, he maintains, he and his unit provided protection for the survivors after the massacre. He, too, later became a victim of persecution, he said, after Doe was publicly beheaded in the streets of Monrovia in 1990 and Taylor was elected president seven years later.

Thomas fled to the United States in 2000, seeking political asylum, and has lived in Delaware County ever since. Yet even before Monday's lawsuit was filed, he had begun to fear that his time in the U.S. was coming to an end.

About two years ago, Thomas said, U.S. immigration authorities informed him that they would not renew his immigration visa after his name showed up on a report on war crimes authored by the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2010.

Unable to find work legally since then, he has relied upon financial support from his children – both here and in Liberia – and spends his days watching his girlfriend work at the restaurant.

Despite those grim prospects, Thomas said Monday, he is committed to staying in Pennsylvania to fight the allegations filed against him in court. After that, he said, who knows?

"What I'm hoping for is for people to get the true story," he said. "When that is done, I'll just go back home. I can't sit here and face this here, when I know I have a perfect record and a perfect reputation back home."

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About **Cholo Brooks** > 5711 Articles

Joel Cholo Brooks is a Liberian journalist who previously worked for several international news outlets including the BBC African Service. He is the CEO of the Global News Network which publishes two local weeklies, The Star and The GNN-Liberia Newspapers. He is a member of the Press Union Of Liberia (PUL) since 1986, and several other international organizations of journalists.

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